



Monkeypox

Guidance for Businesses and Employers

Introduction

There is currently an outbreak of monkeypox in the United States and globally. Monkeypox is caused by a virus rarely seen in the United States until May 2022. The risk for monkeypox transmission in the general population and in most workplaces is currently very low. This guidance provides information for businesses and employers about the current monkeypox outbreak and outlines steps to reduce the risk of exposure and transmission in the workplace.

Background

Monkeypox is a disease that causes a rash, which may be painful. The rash can look like bumps, blisters, ulcers, or scabs. It can also cause flu-like symptoms including fever. Monkeypox is much less contagious than COVID-19.

Examples of monkeypox rash



How monkeypox spreads

Monkeypox is known to spread by close and/or prolonged contact with someone with monkeypox, including through:

- Direct skin-to-skin contact with monkeypox rash, scabs, or sores.
- Contact with respiratory secretions. This can happen during prolonged, face-to-face contact or intimate physical contact.
- Contact with objects and fabrics (such as unwashed clothing and bedding, sharing towels) that have been used by someone with monkeypox and haven't been cleaned.

A person with monkeypox can spread it to others from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a new layer of skin has formed. This usually takes 2 to 4 weeks.

Scientists are still researching more about how monkeypox is spread, including if the virus can be spread when someone has no [symptoms](#), how often it spreads through respiratory secretions, and any other types of interactions or behaviors that may put people at increased risk. Public Health will continue to share information as we learn more.

See ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox for more details and the latest information.



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General infection prevention practices for all workplaces

- Encourage and support employees to stay home when they are sick.
- Use standard cleaning and disinfection methods and materials. Follow your facility's cleaning policies including laundering of bedding, towels, and uniforms, cleaning equipment between use, wiping frequently touched surfaces, etc. Wearing disposable gloves while cleaning/disinfecting is generally recommended.
- Support hand hygiene. Make handwashing facilities and/or hand sanitizer available for workers and customers at no cost. Ensure that employees have adequate time to wash their hands during work time.
 - Encourage employees to wash or sanitize their hands immediately before and after providing services. Anyone who touches lesions or unwashed clothing, linens, or surfaces that may have had contact with lesions should wear disposable gloves when doing so and should [wash their hands](#) immediately after.
 - Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
 - Hand sanitizer should contain at least 60% alcohol.
 - Posters in multiple languages that [remind people to wash or sanitize their hands](#) and show [how to wash their hands](#) are available [here](#).
- Encourage and make it easy for employees to stay up to date with any vaccinations for which they are eligible.
- Use clearly visible signage at the entrance to your business and in electronic communications (e.g., website, social media, email confirmations) to remind visitors to not enter the premises they are sick or symptomatic.

Public Health continues to strongly recommend indoor masking to lower the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

If there is a confirmed case of monkeypox in your facility:

- Refer to CDC [Guidance for Disinfection of the Home and Non-Healthcare Setting](#)
- If an employee has monkeypox, see [Isolation Instructions for People with Monkeypox Infection](#) which is available in multiple languages at ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox.
- If an employee has been exposed to monkeypox, see [Guidance for Individuals Who Have Been Exposed to Monkeypox](#) which is available in multiple languages at ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox.

Reducing risk by cleaning (spas, hotels, gyms, other personal care service providers)

Surfaces and equipment used by visitors or staff:

High touch surfaces and equipment (for example in gyms and spas) should be cleaned and disinfected by following standard cleaning policies and using EPA registered products that are appropriate for monkeypox (see below). Staff should wear disposable gloves when cleaning/disinfecting. Gloves should be disposed of after use, followed by handwashing.

Dishes and utensils:

Soiled dishes and eating utensils can be washed in a dishwasher with detergent and hot water or by hand with hot water and dish soap.



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Linens, towels, and clothing:

Linens, towels, and clothing (for example in gyms, hotels and businesses that provide personal services) can be cleaned with standard laundry detergents. Soiled laundry should be gently and promptly contained in a laundry bag and never be shaken or handled in a manner that may disperse potentially infectious material. It is recommended that workers who handle unwashed linens, towels, and clothing used by other people wear disposable gloves and wear clothing or gowns that cover any exposed skin.

See CDC [Guidance for Disinfection of the Home and Non-Healthcare Setting](#) for guidance about cleaning and disinfecting settings during and after monkeypox infection.

Cleaning products:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a list of disinfectant products that are registered for use against the monkeypox virus. The list includes popular products that many businesses and individuals already use. The list can be found on the [EPA website](#) which has a search tool to look up disinfectants by factors such as product name, contact time, and surface type.

Check that your product is EPA-registered: Find the EPA registration number on the product.

- Read the directions: Check “use sites” and “surface types” to make sure this is the right product for your surface. Next, read the “precautionary statements.”
- Pre-clean the surface: Make sure to wash the surface with soap and water if the directions mention pre-cleaning or if the surface is visibly dirty. Dirt can keep the disinfectant from working.
- Follow the contact time instructions: The surface should remain wet for the amount of time indicated to ensure the product is effective. Reapply if necessary.

Reducing the risk from providing personal care services

Personal care services, such as massage and skin care, should have a low risk of monkeypox transmission as long as already established infection control policies and prevention of communicable disease standards are followed.

- Disinfect equipment that was in direct contact with a client’s skin, including tables, chairs, and face cradles.
- Wash towels and linens after use. Do not reuse towels and linens that have not been washed.
- Wash your hands immediately before and after providing services that involve touching a client’s skin.

Generally, to reduce the possibility of direct contact exposures, wear disposable gloves and ensure your skin is covered while providing services that involve touching a client’s skin and when handling used gowns, towels, and sheets, among others. To reduce exposure to respiratory secretions, wear a mask while providing personal care services, especially those that involve close prolonged face-to-face contact. Masking by both the worker and client is best to reduce the risk of COVID-19 and may also help to reduce risk of monkeypox.

In addition, it is recommended to:

- Post signage instructing clients to delay services if they have a fever or a new, unexplained rash.
- Ask customers/clients prior to providing service if they have any flu-like symptoms (such as a fever) or a new or unexplained rash. Ask them to reschedule service if they do.



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- Visually inspect the area of skin that will be touched.
- Do not touch a rash, (including bumps, blisters, pustules, sores, or scabs) that might be contagious (see images above).

Follow the requirements that apply to your business/facility type such as:

- [California Board of Barbering and Cosmetology](#)
- LAC DPH Environmental Health-[Massage establishments](#)

More information

Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health

ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html

California Department of Public Health

cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Monkeypox.aspx

